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21 November 1969

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SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE
NUMBER 40/50-1-69

Security Conditions in Certain Countries
of the Western Pacific Area

Submitted by

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Concurred in by the

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

as indicated overleaf

21 November 1969

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C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

21 November 1969

SUBJECT: SNIE 40/50-1-69: SECURITY CONDITIONS IN CERTAIN
COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC
AREA

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the likelihood of incidents which would endanger or seriously embarrass Vice President Agnew during his visits to Taipei, Manila, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Bali, Canberra, and Wellington.

CONCLUSIONS

A. In our judgment, in none of the places to be visited is there likely to be a substantial threat to the physical security of the Vice President. We cannot, however, estimate the likelihood -- or exclude the possibility -- of a violent act by an individual, be he a psychopath, a political extremist, or a hired assassin.

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B. As to demonstrations that might embarrass the Vice President, these are least likely to be a problem in Taipei, Bangkok, Bali, and Singapore where little -- if any -- dissent will be tolerated by the leadership. In Kuala Lumpur, also, any attempts to demonstrate would be stifled by the security authorities. In Canberra and Wellington, there may be some hostile demonstrations, but they will probably be relatively small and peaceful, and the authorities appear able to keep them under control. Only with regard to Manila is there concern on our part. Despite generally effective security procedures in the past, some youths may go beyond the bounds of noisy demonstrations and attempt to penetrate police lines and harass members of the official party.

DISCUSSION

1. Manila. The security situation in Manila and its environs has always been of concern in connection with high level US visits. There is a widespread availability of firearms in the Philippines and a tendency toward violence as a way of settling political disputes, demonstrated during the recent presidential election campaign.

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In addition, there are numerous small leftist, ultranationalist, and anti-US groupings active in the Manila area, particularly at the universities, and some are prone to advertise themselves and their opinions by mass demonstrations. This year they have been encouraged by the surge of nationalistic zeal stirred up by President Marcos and other electioneering officials; the focus of much of this "patriotism" has been the soon-to-be renegotiated military and economic agreements with the US.

2. Since the Philippines has a tradition of not repressing the expression of popular feeling, some anti-US demonstrations by student dissidents or other elements are likely to occur. Though such demonstrations will probably be on a relatively small scale, some youths may go beyond the bounds of noisy demonstrations and attempt to penetrate police lines and harass members of the official party. In addition, at the inauguration ceremony, there may be attempts to embarrass Marcos by opposition political elements embittered by the results of the elections; these might be of such a nature as also to embarrass Vice President Agnew. We believe, however, that President Marcos and top Philippine security officials will be extremely concerned to see that the inauguration

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ceremony and the Vice President's reception are not marred by untoward incidents. The local security forces -- including the Presidential Guard Battalion, the Constabulary, and the local police -- will probably be able to handle any demonstrators effectively and, we believe, prevent a situation which would jeopardize the Vice President's safety. They are experienced in such matters and have acquitted themselves well in the past. Moreover, the majority of the local populace appears to be reasonably well disposed toward the US and its leaders.

3. Taipei. There is no reason to expect any security problem in Taipei. Over the past two decades, Nationalist China has given highest priority to the maintenance of strict internal security. Relying on martial law, which still exists throughout Taiwan, the government has built a well disciplined and tightly organized blend of military and police forces that operates effectively to detect and control any tendencies toward public unrest. The Peace Preservation Department under the military, and the Peace Preservation Corps under the police, have wide authority in the investigation and apprehension of potential troublemakers. Highly trained in riot control, these units can be backed, in an emergency,

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by special military units located in the Taipei area. Despite considerable overlap in responsibilities, coordination seems assured by the strong hand of Deputy Premier Chiang Ching-kuo at the top. Under the pressure of such controls, overt dissidence expressed in demonstrations or otherwise has been exceedingly rare in Taiwan.

4. Bangkok. We see no major security problem in Bangkok. The Vice President's visit will be well received by the Thai government and people, as was that of President Nixon several months ago. The leadership will welcome an additional demonstration of US support in the struggle to restrain the Communists in Thailand and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, especially in view of what they judge to be growing hostility toward Thai interests in the US Congress. In general, the friendliness of the population in Bangkok will be complemented by an efficient security force. Demonstrations by students or others are unlikely to occur; if an unauthorized protest were organized, it would attract few participants and be quickly controlled. The Communist insurgencies in the Thai hinterland have so far had no impact on the security situation in Bangkok itself.

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5. Kuala Lumpur. The security situation in Kuala Lumpur has been rather tense since May 1969, when bloody racial rioting occurred between Malay and Chinese ethnic groups. Troops were called in, the city was under curfew for a time, and -- though calm was restored -- racial antagonisms remain and new troubles could be sparked by a racial incident. The US has maintained a neutral posture on the racial issue in Malaysia, however, and we see no reason to expect the Vice President's visit to be used by extremists in either camp as an occasion for triggering further violence.

6. The relatively weak Malaysian Communist movement, in particular radical Chinese youth, might view the visit as an opportunity to demonstrate their anti-US sentiments. Vocal Muslim extremists -- critical of the US role in the Middle East -- might react similarly. But the sporadic, small-scale effort these groups could muster would probably present no major problem to local security agencies. The Royal Malaysian Police, which will have the principal security role, is an efficient and experienced force with intensive training in riot control; and its Special Branch is unusually effective in keeping tabs on dissident groups and their plans.

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7. Singapore. We foresee no significant security problems developing in Singapore, even though 80 percent of its people are ethnically Chinese, some of whom are affronted by the anti-Peking aspect of US foreign policy. The political situation is stable, and the security forces -- notably the highly professional police -- have been extremely effective in maintaining order. Moreover, in recent years, US relations with the government have so improved that local leaders will make every effort to ensure a cordial reception for the Vice President. Thus, it seems unlikely that any but the most modest and decorous assemblage of leftist demonstrators will be tolerated on that occasion.

8. Bali. We perceive few security problems for the Vice President in the city of Den Pasar and at nearby resort areas of Bali. The island draws numerous international figures and state conferences, and Indonesian security forces located there are accustomed to handling protective arrangements. In general, they have performed well. The populace is similarly experienced in receiving foreign visitors and unlikely to present a difficult challenge to the security forces in matters of crowd control. Security forces will also provide effective cooperation in checking the foreign population -- tourist and resident -- in the Den Pasar area.

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9. For the most part, security in Bali will be in the hands of the Indonesian Army which runs the country, even at local governmental levels. Army leaders, particularly President Suharto, are strongly anti-Communist and desirous as well of maintaining the substantial flow of US economic aid to Indonesia. They will probably see value in the Vice President's visit and will do their best to provide a cordial reception as well as adequate protection.

10. Indonesia, nevertheless, has tens of thousands of Communists, Communist sympathizers, and unreconstructed Sukarnoites -- some in Bali and many more in nearby East Java -- who would probably like to use the occasion of the Vice President's visit to embarrass the Suharto regime. They had the same idea during President Nixon's visit, but nothing came of their discussions, mainly because of their great disorganization and the fear of government retaliation. It is well understood that the security forces will not tolerate any sort of public protest which, in their view, might blossom into something more threatening. Dissenters know they can expect the roughest sort of handling by military and police authorities.

11. Canberra. There is likelihood of some public demonstrations in the Australian capital, but these will probably

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be small. Students, intellectuals, and leftists have demonstrated before in Australia against high-ranking US personages -- largely on the Vietnam issue -- but the most significant incidents have occurred in such large cities as Sydney and Melbourne. Canberra is a planned federal city of broad boulevards, relatively small population, and subdued tone. Though dissident youths and others may come from Sydney and elsewhere to demonstrate, their numbers are not likely to be very large nor are their tactics likely to pose a major challenge to the generally competent Australian police and other security personnel. They will probably permit some demonstrations, but in close cooperation with US officials they will take all possible precautions to control the participants and will almost certainly be able to prevent any situation which might endanger the Vice President. Their problems will be made more manageable by the generally high regard for the US which prevails among Australians.

12. Wellington. The security situation in New Zealand is roughly similar to that in Australia. Protests against participation in the Vietnamese war, though sometimes disorderly in Auckland, have been small and peaceful in Wellington. The government is

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likely to permit some demonstrations at the time of the Vice President's visit, but the well trained police and security agencies can be counted upon to control the demonstrators.

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